

Good Morning,

As an educator in the state of Connecticut for the past 22 years, it deeply dismays me to see the current status of education. Teachers and, in particular, administrators, are mere puppets of lobbyist groups intent on "reforming" education. The new teacher evaluation document is one such example. My experience with this document has taken me, and my administrators, away from the "heart" of education: the students. By requiring teachers and administrators to document every breath we take via statistics, charts and scripting, the success of our students is being compromised. I am sure that you see the irony! Rather than spending my collaboration time actually collaborating with colleagues, I must craft objectives and statistics that I can prove by the end of the year. While many elements of the teacher evaluation document promote good teaching and best practice, the over emphasis on a certain percentage of students achieving success is unrealistic. A student's success should be measured on his/her own ability, not with that of other students. Most distressing to me is the student engagement component. Teachers spend HOURS trying to create innovative activities, assignments and assessments. To penalize a teacher because ALL students are not engaged is, again, unrealistic.

Please consider my comments as you discuss this matter. I would write more, but I am off to the first of 2 meetings today before I return to my room to work on creating a Practice Smarter Balanced Assessment for our sophomores. Yes, that is correct...one more initiative for teachers to embrace with little, if any, support from the state or national level.

I can be reached at 860-434-1651 x1208

Sincerely,

Karen H. Duhamel

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